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SUBJECT: Nunn-Lugar Roundtable: Russians Praise CTR, Call for More Cooperation

11. (U) Summary: At an event co-hosted by the Carnegie Moscow Center and the Center for Policy Studies to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction, the Russian guest speakers broadly praised the Program, acknowledging its popularity and success. Some argued, however, that the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe is a potentially destabilizing remnant of the Cold War. They viewed the U.S. plan for missile defense in Europe as a poor example for developing nations and harmful to the U.S.-Russian cooperation on Iran and North Korea. They also argued that a shared warning system and nuclear cooperation within the CIS would enhance the U.S.-Russian partnership. Several suggested a renewal of U.S.-Russia dialogues to improve communication and avoid misperceptions. End Summary.

The Need To Keep Nuclear Weapons At Home

12. (U) On August 28 Senators Lugar and Nunn participated in a wide-ranging discussion on national security during their August 26-31 trip to Russia to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the Nunn-Lugar Program (Transcript and Lugar speech at www.carnegie.ru/en). Colonel General Yevgeny Maslin, the former Chief of the 12th Main Directorate of the Russian Ministry of Defense, responsible for Nuclear Arsenals and a member of the Center for Policy Studies's Expert Council, proposed "settling the question on deployment of nuclear weapons outside the territories of the countries possessing these weapons." Maslin pointed out that "the U.S. now is the world's only country possessing nuclear weapons outside its territory," and described these weapons as "bait" for Islamist extremists. Dispersing a nuclear arsenal around the world only increases the risk of such weapons falling into the hands of terrorists.

Nunn-Lugar For a Safer Tomorrow

13. (U) Maslin said the Nunn-Lugar program "works and is very successful," and acknowledged it has safely and efficiently reduced Russia's stockpile of nuclear weapons. He also said that "concentrating all Soviet nuclear stockpiles in Russia and withdrawing them from the former Soviet republics," especially Ukraine, drastically reduced the danger of nuclear proliferation. Maslin stressed, however, that the threat of radioactive substances being stolen is always present, "and our task is to further reduce this threat." He noted the absence of previous fora for bilateral discussions and suggested establishing a constant dialogue between Russia and the U.S. on nonproliferation issues to prevent the emergence of new nuclear states.

Missile Defense Questioned, Cooperation Urged

14. (U) Dr. Alexei Arbatov, the Nonproliferation Program Co-Chair at the Carnegie Moscow Center, said that the U.S. plan for missile defense in Europe is a bad example for developing nations in light of the commitment to disarmament under Article Six of the Nonproliferation Treaty. He also said it was harmful to U.S.-Russian cooperation on Iran and North Korea. Arbatov noted that the United States and Russia agree that Iran could pose a threat to security, but proposed that no interceptors should be placed in Poland until Iran develops mid-range missiles capable of reaching Europe.

15. (U) Arbatov argued that the U.S. and Russia should cooperate on a shared missile warning system, and that the two countries cannot wait until the change in administrations to take action. He said that linking radar stations in Gabala, Azerbaijan and Armavir (southern Russia) to the U.S. radar in the Czech Republic would be ideal. Arbatov emphasized, "I cannot imagine how governments and countries that have joint warning systems and joint missile defense systems will be a threat to each other."

Needed: A Fresh START

16. (U) Sergey Rogov, the Director of the Institute for USA and Canada Studies in Russia argued for the ratification of a post-START agreement. He said, "it seems we are on the verge of collapse of the rules-based regime. If the START treaty is not extended the INF Treaty could also crumble." This could also endanger the Nunn-Lugar Program, he said.

17. (U) Major-General Vladimir Dvorkin of both Carnegie and the PIR Center proposed creating a nongovernmental group consisting of experts who would be able to provide some new or innovative ideas

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for a post-START process. One major task for this group would be deciding which verification measures to retain and which to leave out. Arbatov agreed, arguing that if the START treaty is not renewed, then certain elements of it could be combined with the Moscow Treaty to produce an agreement.

The Need For 123

18. (U) Rosatom Deputy Director Nicolai Spasskiy co-chaired one of the panels, and spoke of Russia's renewed efforts in the nuclear energy field. After elaborating on Russia's nuclear reorganization and plans to expand nuclear power production, he spoke of cooperation with the U.S. within the framework of the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership and noted areas of potential cooperation with Russia's International Enrichment Center at Angarsk. He predicted the discussions on the 123 Agreement would be concluded soon, and took the opportunity to suggest that failure to agree would be harmful to future U.S.-Russia nuclear cooperation.